DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 414 430 CE 075 330

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TITLE	Volunteer Management. Trends and Issues Alerts.
INSTITUTION	ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education, Columbus, OH.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	1998-00-00
NOTE	4p.
CONTRACT	RR93002001
PUB TYPE	ERIC Publications (071) -- Reference Materials - Bibliographies (131)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Education; Annotated Bibliographies; Computer Oriented Programs; Coordination; *Educational Trends; Individual Characteristics; *Personnel Management; *Program Administration; Recruitment; Risk Management; Technological Advancement; Trend Analysis; *Volunteer Training; *Volunteers
IDENTIFIERS	*Volunteer Management

ABSTRACT

Social, economic, political, and technological changes in the last quarter century have changed the volunteer sector. This publication identifies some of the trends and the issues they raise for the emerging profession of volunteer management. Volunteers are more diverse than ever in age and background. Volunteers' motivations and expectations are changing. Some individuals volunteer to support their careers and gain new skills. Many individuals must budget their time commitments and desire one-time or short-term opportunities. Professionals accustomed to working within competently managed organizations constitute the fastest growing segment of the volunteer force. Although the 1997 Volunteer Protection Act grants volunteers immunity from personal liability in certain circumstances, volunteer managers still need risk management policies and procedures and liability insurance. "Virtual volunteering" is a new concept that enables volunteers to provide services entirely online, thereby giving opportunities to those who might find onsite volunteering difficult due to disability or work schedules. Volunteer managers must be concerned with developing valuable, meaningful assignments and matching volunteers with them, and they are being challenged to recruit, orient, recognize, and supervise a diverse and nontraditional volunteer pool. Volunteer management is becoming increasingly professional, with a literature base, professional societies, and formal education. (Contains an annotated bibliography of 23 print and online resources and a list of 5 organizational resources.) (MN)

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Volunteer Management
Trends and Issues Alerts

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TRENDS AND ISSUES ALERTS
by Sandra Kerka 1998
ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education

Volunteer Management

Social, economic, political, and technological changes in the last quarter century have changed the volunteer sector. This publication identifies some of the trends and the issues they raise for the emerging profession of volunteer management, concluding with a list of resources.

The Volunteer Pool. Volunteers are more diverse than ever in age and background. Longer life expectancy, higher levels of formal education, and early retirement have increased the numbers of older adult volunteers. Many employers strongly encourage and support volunteering in their work force (Seel 1997). Service learning and mandatory community service for high school and college students have increased volunteering among younger people (Parsons 1996). As funding cuts have affected nonprofits' budgets, national initiatives such as the Points of Light Foundation, the Corporation for National Service, and the Presidents' Summit for America's Future are attempting to broaden volunteerism ("Presidents' Summit 1997). Volunteers' motivations and expectations are changing. Some volunteer to support their careers and gain new skills. Many have to budget their time commitments and desire one-time or short-term opportunities. "The fastest growing segment of the volunteer force consists of professionals accustomed to working within competently managed organizations" (Fisher and Cole 1993, p. 4), and they want a say in the organizations they support (Morris and Caro 1996). Mandated community service for offenders or welfare recipients has also expanded the volunteer pool (Brad-ner 1997).

Risk Management. A litigious society has increased individuals' concerns about their liability as volunteers. In 1997, Congress passed the Volunteer Protection Act, which grants immunity from personal liability in certain circumstances. However, volunteer managers still need risk management policies and procedures and liability insurance (American Society of Association Executives 1997).

Technology. "Virtual Volunteering" (1997) is a new concept that enables volunteers to provide services entirely online, allowing those who might find onsite volunteering difficult due to disability or work schedules to participate. The Internet also provides innovative ways for volunteer managers to recruit, post opportunities and information, and communicate with colleagues (Hawthorne 1997).

Management Issues. Given these trends, volunteer managers must be concerned with developing valuable, meaningful assignments and matching volunteers with them. They are challenged to recruit, orient, recognize, and supervise a diverse and nontraditional volunteer pool, including offsite and online supervision. They must be able to use technological tools and, given downsizing and budget restrictions, be sensitive to relationships between paid staff and volunteers (Scheier 1993). Volunteer management is becoming increasingly professionalized, with a literature base, professional societies, and formal education (Fisher and Cole 1993).

Resources

American Society of Association Executives. "Special Report: The Volunteer Protection Act of 1997." *ASAE Association Management Magazine* August 1997. <http://www.asaenet.org /Publications/AMaug97/ 8special1.html>
Includes "How Landmark Legislation Evolved" and "How the New Law Will Affect Associations."

Bembry, J. X. "The Impact of Volunteer Coordinators on Volunteer Programs." *Journal of Volunteer Administration* 14, no. 2 (Winter 1996): 14-20. (EJ 538 732)
The presence of full-time volunteer coordinators at Volunteer Maryland! sites had significant qualitative and quantitative impact on those sites.

Bradner, J. H. "Public Issues Facing Non-Profits and Volunteerism in the United States." *Journal of Volunteer Administration* 15, no. 3 (Spring 1997): 15-17. (EJ 543 913)
Issues include scrutiny of nonprofits' tax-exempt status, challenges from small businesses, the right to advocate in Congress, volunteer liability protection, and mandated community service by students and welfare recipients.

Caudron, S. "Volunteer Efforts Offer Low-Cost Training Options." *Personnel Journal* 73, no. 6 (June 1994): 38-44.
Employers are finding that worker involvement in volunteer activities provides growth opportunities that may not be found in on-the-job training.

Ellis, S. J. *From the Top Down. The Executive Role in Volunteer Program Success. rev. ed.* Philadelphia, PA: Energize, 1996.
Identifies the critical link between top management and the success of volunteer programs. Shows how to develop vision, tap resources, manage legal and risk issues, and assess the economic value of volunteer contributions.

Ellis, S. J. *The Volunteer Recruitment (and Membership Development) Book.* Philadelphia, PA: Energize, 1996.
Explains how to design volunteer assignments to attract the most qualified people, examines the influence of organizational image on recruitment, and suggests ways to increase the diversity of the volunteer base.

Fisher, J. C., and Cole, K. M. *Leadership and Management of Volunteer Programs.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993.
Describes the knowledge, skills, and abilities required of professional managers of volunteers.

Hawthorne, N. "The History and Development of Internet Resources for Volunteer Programs." *Journal of Volunteer Administration* 16, no. 1 (Fall 1997): 28-33.
Describes the major listservs, websites, and other Internet resources related to volunteer management.

Hinton, K. L. "Perceived Training Needs of Volunteers in Government Service." *Public Personnel Management* 24, no. 4 (Winter 1995): 531-534. (EJ 528 876)
Citizens serving on government boards and commissions expressed interest in receiving training on identifying and analyzing issues, understanding community resources, parliamentary procedure, group process, and listening skills.

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Kuyper, J. et al. ***Volunteer Program Administration.*** Washington, DC: American Council for the Arts, 1993.
Addresses program mission and structure, recruitment and selection, training, development, recognition, volunteer-staff relations, and evaluation of volunteers and the program.

Lundin, S. M. "When All Else Fails: Releasing a Volunteer." ***Journal of Volunteer Administration*** 15, no. 1 (Fall 1996): 15-18. (EJ 538 738)
Policies and procedures that volunteer managers should have in place when it becomes necessary to terminate the services of a volunteer are discussed.

McCammon, L., and Hand, S. "On-Target Orientations." ***Journal of Volunteer Administration*** 14, no. 3 (Spring 1996): 13-16.
Volunteer orientation should meet both volunteer and organizational needs. Orientation should address the key areas of safety, affiliation, purpose, and performance.

Mihalicz, D. W., and Goh, S. C. "The Relationship between Volunteer Motivations and Behavior in Non-Profit Organizations." ***Journal of Volunteer Administration*** 15, no. 1 (Fall 1996): 19-27.
A research study identified types of volunteer motivations and their relationship to the amount of time committed and degree and type of involvement by volunteers. Results suggest ways to match volunteers to appropriate assignments.

Morris, R., and Caro, F. G. "Productive Retirement: Stimulating Greater Volunteer Efforts to Meet National Needs." ***Journal of Volunteer Administration*** 14, no. 2 (Winter 1996): 5-13. (EJ 538 731)
Many older adults who volunteer desire higher levels of responsibility and more substantial time commitments, requiring organizational investment in the restructuring of volunteer roles.

Parsons, C. "How to Make Service into Service Learning." ***Journal of Volunteer Administration*** 14, no. 3 (Spring 1996): 35-38. (EJ 538 734)
Volunteer managers face new challenges in ensuring that assignments of service-learning students are designed to enrich their academic coursework.

"The Presidents' Summit for America's Future." ***Journal of Volunteer Administration*** 16, no. 1 (Fall 1997): 2-19.
Includes reflections on the April 1997 volunteerism summit, as well as an Internet dialogue on literacy, volunteers, and the summit.

Rodriguez, S. "Diversity and Volunteerism." ***Journal of Volunteer Administration*** 15, no. 3 (Spring 1997): 18-20.
Volunteer management is made more challenging by the increasing diversification of volunteers and clients with different value systems and perspectives on volunteerism.

Scheier, I. H. ***Building Staff/Volunteer Relations. rev. ed.*** Philadelphia, PA: Energize, Inc., 1993.
Examines causes of conflict between paid employees and volunteers and explains how to analyze tasks and work preferences in order to identify the best ways for all to work together.

Seel, K. "Bridging the Sectors: Developing an Effective Workplace Volunteer Council." ***Journal of Volunteer Administration*** 15, no. 4 (Summer 1997): 5-14.
Shows volunteer managers how to work with collaborative groups of representatives who mobilize volunteers from corporate/business workplaces for community service.

Sexton, P. ***Day Care Link—Building Blocks for a Literate Community.*** 1996. (ED 401 529)
Shows how to operate an off-site volunteer program, addressing screening, placement, training, orientation, appreciation, and recognition.

Silver, N. "Organizational Culture and Volunteer Programs." In ***At the Heart: The New Volunteer Challenges to Community Agencies.*** San Francisco: San Francisco Foundation, 1988. <http://www.energizeinc.com/energize/art/aatt.html>
A key element in ensuring the "fit" of volunteers with an organization is socializing them to the organization's culture.

Tremper, C., and Kostin, G. ***No Surprises: Controlling Risks in Volunteer Programs.*** Washington, DC: Nonprofit Risk Management Center, 1993. (ED 375 925)
Outlines a strategy for implementing a process to manage physical, economic, legal, personnel, and public relations risks associated with volunteer programs.

"Virtual Volunteering." Impact Online, 1997. <http://linux..impactonline.org/vv/>
Describes ways that people can contribute time and expertise entirely through cyberspace. Explains how virtual volunteering expands the volunteer base and how volunteer managers can use the Internet to market volunteer opportunities.

Organizational Resources

Association for Volunteer Administration, 10565 Lee Hwy., Suite 104, Fairfax, VA 22030-3135; 703/352-6222; fax: 703/352-6767; e-mail: ava@washingtongroupinc.com; http://www.txserve.org/ava.html. Publishes ***Journal of Volunteer Administration.***

Energize, Inc., 5450 Wissahickon Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19144; 215/438-8342; fax: 215/438-0434; e-mail: info@energizeinc.com; http://www.energizeinc.com. Website includes volunteer management articles, book catalog, class schedule, job board.

Sound Volunteer Management, 9594 First Ave., NE, Box 413, Seattle, WA 98115-2012; 206/525-2104; fax: 206/525-3320; e-mail: volunteer@halcyon.com; http://www.halcyon.com/penguin/svm/svmpage.htm.

Volunteer Today: The Electronic Gazette for Volunteerism: <http://www.bmi.net/mba/index.html>

VOLUNTEERS listserv: join by sending the message SUBSCRIBE VOLUNTEERS followed by your full name to listserv @listserv.aol.com

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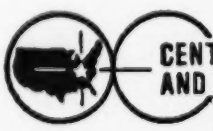

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